



# Glossary of Terms

## 1 – Biomes of the World

**Adaptation** adjustment to environmental conditions

**Biome** major ecological community

**Biosphere** part of the world in which life exists

**Biota** plants and animals of a region

**Coniferous** evergreen tree having cones

**Deciduous** refers to seasonal falling of leaves from trees

**Geology** study of the history of earth's surface and rocks

**Latitude** distance north or south of the equator

**Nocturnal** nighttime

**Organic** living or having once lived (all organic material contains carbon)

**Terrestrial** relating to the land surface of the earth

## 2 – Mediterranean Biome

**Aromatic** having a strong smell (for example, some plant oils)

**Chaparral** shrubby vegetation in Southern California adapted to hot, dry summers

**Continent** one of 7 great divisions of land on earth (for example, North America)

**Degraded** wearing down of the land by erosion

**Dormant** inactive

**Drought** prolonged period of dryness or lack of precipitation

**Flammable** capable of readily igniting or catching fire

**Marine** relating to the sea

**Precipitation** condensation from vapor (gas) that falls as rain or snow

**Regeneration** certain plants and animals re-grow parts due to loss or injury



## Supplemental Information

### 3 – Closer to Home

**Aspect** facing a particular direction

**Ecosystem** group of plant and/or animal communities that functions as a unit in a specific habitat

**Elevation** height above sea level

**Erosion** wearing away by wind and/or water

**Flora** plants

**Metropolitan** referring to a large city

**Nutrient** food material used to promote growth and repair

**Proximity** nearness

**Species** organisms capable of interbreeding

### 4 – Ingredients of a Fire

**Carbohydrate** formed through photosynthesis by green plants, and containing the elements carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen (sugars and starches)

**Combustion** chemical process of oxidation, accompanied by light and heat

**Dehydrate** to remove water

**Foehn** warm, dry wind (example: Santa Ana winds in Southern California)

**Fuel** material consumed by burning and generating heat

**Oxidation** to combine with oxygen

**Volatile** readily able to vaporize (become a gas)

### 5 – Conditions for a Fire

**Humidity** degree of wetness

**Slope** ground that forms an incline

**Specific heat** ratio of quantity of heat required to raise the temperature of a substance one degree, to that required to raise the temperature of an equal mass of water one degree



## Supplemental Information

### 6 – Fire & Plants

**Convection** the transfer of heat by movement of air, gas or heated liquid

**Density** mass per unit volume

**Dormancy** inactivity

**Dormant** period of inactivity

**Fertility** capable of reproducing

**Germinate** to begin to grow and develop

**Predestined** something that will happen

**Species** organisms capable of interbreeding

### 7 – Fire Behavior & Weather

**Atmospheric** mass of air surrounding the earth

**Climate** the average course of weather in a specific area over a period of years

**Cumulus** clouds with flat base, piled up like a mountain

**Dust devil** small whirlwind containing dust

**Protocol** a plan

**Relative humidity** ratio of amount of moisture in the air, compared to amount possible

**Stratus** cloud of great horizontal extension at low altitude

**Water vapor** water in a gaseous form

**Weather** day by day conditions of the atmosphere

### 8 – Fire & Soil

**Acid** pH less than 7, containing (OH)-

**Alkaline** having a pH more than 7, base or basic

**Annual** plant completing life cycle in one year

**Bedrock** solid rock underlying the surface material, such as soil

**Clay** earthy material composed of fine particles of minerals

**Germination** beginning to develop

**Horizon** one of distinct layers of soil in a vertical section



## Supplemental Information

**Hydroxyl** chemical group made up of (OH)-

**Ion** electrically charged atom

**Loam** soil made up of a mix of clay, silt and sand

**Organic** things that once lived or are living; contains carbon

**Organism** any living thing

**Parent rock** material from which something is derived

**Percolate** to diffuse through

**pH** degree of hydrogen ion concentration

**Sand** loose, granular material resulting from breakdown of rocks

**Silt** loose sedimentary material containing small rock particles

**Terrain** physical features of a piece of land

**Topsoil** surface soil in which plants have their roots

### 9 – Fire & Water

**Algae** aquatic plants such as seaweed, with chlorophyll

**Aquatic** taking place in water

**Fauna** animal life

**Flora** plant life

**Groundwater** water within the earth that supplies wells/springs

**Habitat** place where life exists

**Hydrology** study of distribution of and quality of water

**Nitrate** a salt of nitric acid, source of nitrogen for plants

**Plankton** floating, minute animal and plant life

**Sediment** matter that settles to the bottom of a liquid

**Spawning** to lay or fertilize eggs in water

**Terrain** physical features of a tract of land

**Topography** the relative position and elevation of land forms

**Turbidity** clarity of water

**Watershed** region draining to a body of water



## Supplemental Information

### 11 – Prescribed Fire

**Backfire** a fire started to clear an area in advance of a moving fire

**Crew** a group of people held together by a common purpose

**Ditch** a long, narrow excavation dug in the earth

**Drought** a prolonged period of dryness

**Firebreak** a barrier of cleared land intended to check an advancing fire

**Forecast** to predict based on observations

**Hand line** line of cleared vegetation made by crews to contain fire to sides of the site

**Headfire** a prescribed fire at the top of a slope along a firebreak

**Prescribed fire** a planned fire in a designated area

**Smoldering** to burn without flames, often causing much smoke

**Wind speed** how fast the wind is moving

### 12 – Wildland/Urban Interface

**Issue** a matter that is in dispute between two parties

**Landscaping** to modify plant cover

**Precaution** care taken in advance

**Risk** to expose to danger

**Stakeholder** person who has an interest in a procedure

**Strategy** a careful plan

**Values** principles that are valuable or desirable

**Wildfire** a sweeping and destructive fire

**Wildland/urban interface** boundary between populated area and forest/grassland

### 13 – Wildfire & the Media

**Sensationalism** process used in oral or written communication to heighten excitement about a specific subject

### 14 – Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area – Your Park

**Airshed** air within a given geographic area